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Copy 4 of 5
23 September 1974

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MEMORANDUM FOR: General Wilson

THROUGH:

SUBJECT: Proposed Termination of SIGINT and PHOTINT
Studies

1. As a part of our Phase II Middle East post-mortem effort, we have produced two draft papers (see Tabs A and B) which deal with the performance of the SIGINT and PHOTINT communities during the October War. Regretfully, I now urge that we withdraw these two papers.

--They do not deal with major existing problems and may not offer effective solutions to those problems which are addressed. Further, though they do indeed touch on aspects of broad problems, it may be that what the papers do not discuss is at least as important as what they do.

--PRD does not have the credentials and the charter to conduct a broader investigation. In fact, it probably lacks them to produce the rather narrow studies at hand. Peering into the world of collection, requirements, and tasking is certainly germane to product review but is not and should not be one of this Division's principal functions.

--In any event, I am not sure that we have dug deeply enough to justify the ways in which these papers describe processes, identify problems, and recommend solutions.

--Reactions to these papers from those elements in the community most directly concerned have been negative-- in some cases scathingly so (see Tab C). This in itself

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

should not persuade us to withdraw; intense opposition could be prompted largely by bureaucratic concerns. But I do not think that is what is mainly bothering people in this instance. (See, for example, the comments from [REDACTED] which, while painfully candid, are seriously intended and do not, in my judgment, simply reflect concern over an attack on COMIREX's vested interests.)

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--Most important, the reactions we have received to date portend a brouhaha at USIB should these papers be published. The IC Staff would gain very little from such a brouhaha. On the contrary. And, ultimately, it might turn out that we had expended a fair amount of capital on a weak (and lost) cause.

--At the same time, we have, I think, already done some good by calling forceful attention to problems of mutual concern. We do not have to consider all of our motion in these areas simply as wasted effort.

2. My specific proposal is, then, that we abandon these two projects and so inform those community elements which have been directly involved. This could be done informally, with a minimum of embarrassment. A note from me--along the lines suggested on the next page--should suffice. There might be a small chorus of "we-told-you-sos," but the dominant reaction would more likely sound like a sigh of relief.* I would, as our last act, donate these papers to CPAD in the hope that they would be useful to those in that division who are involved in similar or related studies.

[REDACTED]

Chief, PRD/IC

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Attachments:

Sample Memorandum

Tab A - SIGINT Paper [REDACTED]

Tab B - PHOTINT Paper [REDACTED]

Tab C - Comments from Messrs. Carver, [REDACTED] Allen,
Hicks & Generals Wolff and Faurer

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*Because of General Graham's early interest in these papers, it would probably be wise to inform him in advance of any such decision.

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IC/PRD, [REDACTED]

Distribution:

Copy 1 - AD/DCI/IC, Addressee

2 - IC Registry (w/o SIGINT & PHOTINT Papers)

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4 - PRD Subject (w/o SIGINT & PHOTINT Papers)

5 - PRD Chrono (w/o SIGINT & PHOTINT Papers)

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Sample Memorandum

23 September 1974

Dear _____:

We wish to thank you for your help on this project. We know from your comments that considerable time and thought was devoted to a consideration of the problems and the proposals addressed in our draft papers. We feel that this exercise, by itself, has not been without its benefits.

We are now persuaded, however, that further effort would not be rewarding, and we propose not to publish these papers formally for submission to USIB. The problems we sought to identify no longer seem to loom quite so large or seem quite so susceptible to solution (in the ways we suggested) as they once did. Moreover, as some of you have pointed out (though in less euphemistic terms), our approach was quite selective, perhaps excessively so; we were, if you like, attacking only one small segment of a rather broad front.

One more point: Our interest in establishing a large role for the NIOs during crises has probably been overtaken in effect, by events. The NIOs undoubtedly will play such a role in the future (as indeed at least one of them did in the past) and there now seems to

be no need--and precious little sympathy--for the formalization of
that role in the manner we had suggested.


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